



LGBTQ+ History Month

Coffee Break hosted by
LGBTQ+ and Allies Network

January 2024



Our Purpose


“ To create a safe space for members of the LGBTQ+ community and allies to openly share, learn and discuss the issues that matter to us and drive action together to make a positive difference ”

LGBTQ+ History Month



During February 2023 we highlighted some of our own inspiring figures from LGBTQ History, this year **we'd love to hear from you...**

Celebrating LGBTQ+ History This February

News by  Wallace Andrew on 16 FEB 2023

February is LGBTQ History Month and a chance to celebrate the community's contributions to all aspects of society, from politics to the arts. Below, members of DS Smith's LGBTQ+ & Allies network have shared individuals who have inspired them, how far LGBTQ+ rights have come and how much further society can go.

If there are any key moments in LGBTQ+ history you think people need to be aware of, please share on Yammer using the hashtag [#LGBTQHistoryMonth](#).

If you would like to become a member of the LGBTQ+ & Allies network, please [sign up here](#).

A Cinematic Pioneer

Chosen by [Clara Navarro](#), *Recycling Graduate*

[Dorothy Arzner](#) was the only woman director during the "Golden Age" of Hollywood's studio system - from the 1920s to the early 1940s - and the woman director with the largest body of work in Hollywood to this day. She was the only female director to successfully transition from silent films to "talkies". Though Arzner was not "out" in the same way we envision it today, she was in a relationship with dancer Marion Morgan. As was the case with so many other technically closeted artists in the industry, Arzner's homosexuality was something of an open secret. Some of the films she directed over the years include *The Wild Party*, *Dance, Girl, Dance*, and *Fashions for Women*, among many others.



An Icon of Science

Chosen by [Anne Curtis](#), *Sales Manager - Strategic Accounts*



[Alan Turing](#) was a mathematician who worked as a code breaker at Bletchley Park, the cryptological establishment tasked with cracking the Enigma Code, which proved crucial in helping the Allied nations win WWII. Turing was prosecuted in 1952 for being gay. As an alternative to a jail sentence Alan Turing accepted chemical castration and, just two years later, he sadly took his own life. Perhaps more than any figure in LGBTQ+ history, Turing represents just how unfair the treatment of this community has been throughout history and the tragic consequences that have befallen people because of their sexuality. Turing's story also offers a guide for how to rehabilitate historical legacies. Turing appears on the £50 note and in 2019, in a BBC survey, members of the public voted Alan Turing the Greatest Scientist of the 20th Century.

A Place for the Community

Chosen by [David Hutton](#), *Resourcing Partner*

[Manchester, England](#) has long been thought of as one of the gay capitals of both the United Kingdom and Europe. Manchester has had a gay village, Canal Street, where the historic Union pub has been hosting LGBTQ+ events including drag shows since the 1940s, long before homosexuality was decriminalized. Connections to LGBTQ+ history are everywhere in Manchester. The city is where Alan Turing is from. In 1964 it played host to the Homosexual Law Reform Committee which campaigned for an end to laws discriminating against the LGBTQ+ community and throughout the 80s and 90s played host to a host of venues that were unashamedly welcoming of the LGBTQ+ community at a time when raids on such establishments were common. In 1999, Manchester was featured in the ground-breaking Channel 4 series *Queer as Folk* which brought attention to the lives of LGBTQ+ Mancunians like never before.



Presidential Recognition

Chosen by [Andy Wallace](#), *Group Internal Communications*



Throughout his political career, [Joe Biden](#) has been a staunch advocate and defender of the LGBTQ+ community. In particular, he became the first high-profile supporter of same-sex marriage in the US. In an interview with David Gregory on NBC's *Meet the Press*, then-Vice President Biden said the following: "I am absolutely comfortable with the fact that men marrying men, women marrying women, and heterosexual men and women marrying another are entitled to the same exact rights, all the civil rights, all the civil liberties." This statement helped spur the gay rights movement in the United States and prompted President Barack Obama to issue a declaration of support for gay marriage three weeks later. Since becoming the 46th President of the United States in 2020, Biden has continued to enshrine the rights of LGBTQ+ people in law. Most recently he signed the Respect for Marriage Act which ensures that gay marriage will remain the law of the land in America, no matter which administration is in power and which individuals sit on the Supreme Court.

Why Medicine and Healthcare?

2024's theme is '**Medicine – #UnderTheScope**'.

The theme for 2024 has been chosen to shine a light on the contributions to the field of medicine, including staff in healthcare settings.

The aim is also to highlight the LGBT+ community's experience in receiving healthcare treatment.



About LGBTQ+ History Month



The first LGBTQ+ history month took place in 1994 in the US, created by the first publicly 'out' teacher.

5 interesting facts about LGBTQ+ history here: [What is LGBTQ+ History Month?](#)

LGBT+ History Month Aims and Focus

To promote equality and diversity for the benefit of the general public. The organisers want to do this in a range of ways, including:

- **Raising awareness** and **advancing education** on the matters most affecting the LGBTQ+ community
- **Increasing the visibility of LGBTQ+ people**, including their history, lives and life experiences in schools, educational institutions, workplaces and community spaces
- Endeavouring to **make the world safer for all LGBTQ+ communities**
- Promoting the welfare of LGBTQ+ people, ensuring the education system in the UK **recognises and enables people to achieve their full potential** and contribute significantly to society

Key facts relating to medical LGBTQ+ experiences



A study by the British Medical Association which surveyed doctors and medical students across the UK in 2022 found that:

- 2 in 5 LGBTQ+ respondents directly experienced homophobia or biphobia
- Half of trans respondents experienced transphobia
- A poll by Harvard found that nearly a sixth of LGBTQ+ adults have experienced discrimination at the doctor's office or in another health care setting, while a fifth say they have avoided seeking medical care out of fear of discrimination
- This video is incredibly insightful: [Equality in Medicine](#)



How we want to amplify LGBT history month...

We will be sharing posts on LinkedIn and Viva Engage. **Please join us to shine a light on people you admire in the field of medicine...**

This month is LGBTQ history month across the world
The central theme shines a light on the contributions to the field of medicine. 🏳️‍🌈

At DS Smith our active networks are coming together across our sites to share inspirational figures in this field. We passionately believe that by understanding their lives and what they have achieved enables us all to learn about tolerance, kindness, equality and how that improves employee well being and psychological safety. #DSSmith #LGBTQHistoryMonth #Medicalheroes #workplacepride #PsychologicalSafety #EmployeeWellbeing



Anne Curtis
Business Unit Lead, e-commerce & LGBTQ+ & Allies Network Chair

"I have chosen Dr Alan Hart, the personal determination against all discriminations where he moved consistently to try and outrun prejudices. His trailblazing Xray skills to identify Tuberculosis saved countless lives and this work aided with the management of Tuberculosis to reduce spread. Tuberculosis also carried a public stigma, and this drove Hart on to be integral to public health improvements and understanding. What a story to inspire and reflect..."



Dr Alan Hart
Transgender Radiologist, USA

This month is LGBTQ history month across the world
The central theme shines a light on the contributions to the field of medicine. 🏳️‍🌈

At DS Smith our active networks are coming together across our sites to share inspirational figures in this field. We passionately believe that by understanding their lives and what they have achieved enables us all to learn about tolerance, kindness, equality and how that improves employee well being and psychological safety. #DSSmith #LGBTQHistoryMonth #Medicalheroes #workplacepride #PsychologicalSafety #EmployeeWellbeing



Clara Navarro Veija
Sustainability Manager & LGBTQ+ & Allies Network Volunteer

"I would like to shine a light on Dr Louisa Martindale **became the first woman GP**, in 1920, after setting up her private practice in Brighton, UK. Alongside other Brighton feminists, she developed the New Sussex Hospital for Women, where she was a senior surgeon and physician. She then became a specialist in the early treatment of cervical cancer and was awarded the CBE in 1931. Louisa lived with her partner Ismay FitzGerald for three decades, and writes of her love for her in her autobiography A Woman Surgeon, published in 1951.



Dr Louisa Martindale
First woman GP, UK

Examples of typical posts we would like to share



How you can help



Please help by **expressing your interest** in sharing a LinkedIn post about a person who inspires you within the theme of LGBTQ+ and medicine, or, to **provide a recommendation** of an LGBTQ+ medical pioneer we can shine a light on.

Simply chat with us in the teams network or, if you prefer send a message to a member of the Steerco directly (Pippa Mole, Anouska Kett, Anne Curtis, Clara Navarro Veiga, or David Hatton)